

# BAXTER SPRINGS NEWS.

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BAXTER SPRINGS, - - KANSAS

## OLD-FASHIONED FAMILY JAR.

My old man an' I've had a fallin' out. An' just about nothin' worth talkin' about; At dinner he looked at the bread with a frown. An' said it was burnt, when 'twas only done brown.

Now I've been housekeepin' so long, I have learnt, As well as he has, when my cookin' gets burnt; He don't need to fuss about nothin', I think, As if all he cared for was vittles an' drink.

Most folks, nowadays, as a matter of course, Get mad as a hornet, then get a divorce; I'll do no such thing, but I'll soon let him see He don't gain a cent's worth by fussin' with me.

He'll find what burnt bread means, next week, To his sorrow; He does hate billed onions; I'll cook some to-morrow; I won't say a word to make talk in the town, But I'll learn my old man when cookin' is done brown.

—Texas Sittings.

## THE VICTIM OF HIS CLOTHES.

By Howard Fielding and Frederick E. Burton.

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### CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUED.

"MRS. L. DRANE."

Jimmy opened the door invitingly. Intensely relieved that the escaped maniac should show no signs of violence, but Lawrence held back.

"Why do you ask these things?" he inquired.

"I represent the Evening Dispatch, and we like to get interviews from prominent men who favor New Haven with a visit."

"Young man," said Lawrence, laying his hand impressively on Jimmy's shoulder; whereat Jimmy jumped about a rod backwards and got behind a chair.

"Young man," continued Lawrence, stepping forward, somewhat excited at this encounter and the strangeness of it, "I know nothing whatever about crops, and what few mortgages I hold are my concern and of no interest to the public."

Jimmy looked discouraged, and Drane foolishly supposed that he had settled the business and rid himself of the annoyance. He even felt some wholly un-



I DECLINE TO BE INTERVIEWED.

necessary compunctions of conscience at having been so rude to the young man. However, he said nothing more, but walked rapidly away.

The reporter, of course, followed him and did not lose sight of him until he turned into the Beaver House. Then Jimmy ran to the nearest telegraph office and sent this dispatch to a New York newspaper: "1,000 words interview with Lawrence Drane, escaped maniac. Very violent. Shall have him locked up in half hour."

This done he returned to the Beaver House, learned that the gentleman had gone up-stairs to see a friend, sent a message to police headquarters and sat down to write a glowing account of the capture, which he regarded as good as consummated, for his local paper and his New York patron. He had directed the answer to his telegram to be sent to the Beaver House, and it came just as two stalwart policemen from headquarters hurried in. Jimmy began to explain the situation to them as he opened the envelope, but when he read the dispatch his jaw dropped in a way that threatened to rend his countenance in twain. This was the editor's answer:

"Don't want it. Must be mistaken. Drane in custody here. Captured last night."

The policemen growled and poked fun at the reporter, but Jimmy was so sure that he was right, and argued so earnestly that they consented to stay awhile and take a look at the alleged Lawrence Drane.

Meantime the victim of this pursuit had scanned the register of the Beaver House on the dates just subsequent to the theft of his clothes and belongings. At a time that corresponded exactly with the tramp's story, he was horrified to find this entry:

"Mr. and Mrs. L. Drane, Kansas City."

He learned that "Mrs. Drane" was in and sent up to her a card with his own name scrawled upon it. In due time he was ushered to the door of the best room in the house. He knocked and entered at once.

A richly-dressed young woman ran quickly across the room crying:

"Where have you been? and why?" She stopped, gave a faint scream and sank into a chair, staring at Lawrence

in bewilderment. On his part he felt an immense relief to find that the young woman was not Bessie and bore no resemblance to her except in general figure.

"Madam," he said, "you will pardon this intrusion when I tell you that I am Lawrence Drane, of Kansas City. I think we have both been imposed upon and between us we may be able to set matters right."

"I don't understand you," replied "Mrs. Drane," "but you can sit down."

Mr. Drane complied and after a pause began:

"You seem to bear my name, madam, but I am quite certain that you have no right to it. You see, a fellow stole my clothes and money some days ago and proceeded to masquerade around the country under my name, bringing me into all kinds of trouble. I know he came to New Haven, for he collected money here in my name."

Mr. Drane hesitated. "Mrs. Drane" was dreadfully pale and he disliked beyond measure to explain to her that her marriage was invalid and that even were it genuine she had been tricked by a penniless adventurer and criminal.

"I didn't have nothing to do with it," remarked the young woman, faintly.

This language struck Lawrence as strange, coming from a wealthy woman, but her ignorance only made her situation the more pitiable.

"I have no question," he hastened to say, "that you have acted with the utmost innocence in the matter, and it is exceedingly painful for me to tell you that your husband's name is not Drane, and that he is not the wealthy man he represented himself to be."

"Mrs. Drane" was greatly agitated, and in order not further to embarrass her, Lawrence rose and walked across the room to a window. A big steamer trunk had been placed there. It was plastered all over with customs slips of various countries, and conspicuous among them was a tag such as is used by passengers who wish to have their baggage available during a voyage. It read:

### WANTED.

MRS. BESSIE HARLAND, BUFFALO, N. Y., AMERICA.

FIRST CAHN, No. 137.

There were more words than these, but the name and address of the owner were enough to startle him and throw a great light on the situation. This "Mrs. Drane" must be the servant who had run away with his Bessie's property! What a complication! She believed the rascally tramp to be rich; he believed her to be the possessor of thirteen millions; they had married. What an awakening for each!

This discovery, however, had to be verified; and the dishonest young woman who had brought Bessie Harland so much trouble must be punished for it. Lawrence felt that he must move with exceeding caution. He turned, hardly certain as to what course he should take, when the young woman, blushing fitfully and with quivering voice, said:

"My husband's name ain't Drane at all, at least he said it wasn't. I was truly married to him right in this town, and I can prove it. If you know where he is—"

"He's locked up in New York," explained Lawrence as she paused. The young woman's eyes flashed, almost joyously, Mr. Drane thought, and he wondered at it. She became suddenly very grave and continued:

"I hope you won't be mean with me. If you will go with me to the minister that married us, I can prove what I say, and p'raps he'll help us."

"I fail to see what good that will do," said Lawrence.

"But I want you to know that I was really married," persisted the young woman. "Then I'll tell you all how it happened, if you won't got me into trouble."

"I will agree not to get you into trouble," replied Lawrence, "if you will give me the correct address of Mrs. Bessie Harland, and if you will also return her property to her."

This blunt request came pretty near leaving a fainting woman on Mr. Drane's hands. Her blushes left her face and she collapsed into the chair like a limp



HE DOES LOOK LIKE A LUNATIC.

rag. Lawrence hastened to thrust various bottles of liquids that he saw on a mantel into her hands, and he fanned her vigorously with his hat.

It was some time before she recovered sufficiently to accuse him of desiring to play some trick upon her. He protested that such was not his intention and urged her to be calm, promising to go at once to the clergyman's if she would write the desired address. This she finally did and then retired to dress for the street. While he was waiting Lawrence wondered that she had not made particular inquiries about her husband, and his conclusion was that she cared nothing for him, her only de-

sire being to possess his supposed wealth.

When at last they started down-stairs, the young woman thrust her hand into his arm and leaned heavily upon him, saying:

"I am so upset by this."

Lawrence gallantly undertook the burden, and as they passed through the office he saw his acquaintance, Jimmy, the reporter, watching him narrowly. Two policemen were there, too, and as he passed them he heard one of them say:

"He does look like a confounded lunatic, for a fact."

### CHAPTER X.

At all seasonable hours the streets of New Haven are full of pretty girls. They are merry girls, too, who like to laugh when there's anything funny in sight. Drane, with the bogus Mrs. Drane upon his arm, passed some thousands of them, or at least he could have sworn that he did, and they all looked out of the corners of their eyes, and grinned with the corners of their mouths.

It is harrowing to be the object of this kind of attention. It suggests the possibility of a practical joker's placard on one's back, or a black mark alongside one's nose. Drane investigated the subject as well as he could by feeling stealthily up and down his back, and using his handkerchief with great vigor. But for the life of him he couldn't find anything calculated to create so much innocent amusement.

"I suppose I look funny without my mustache," he thought, "but hang me if I should expect people to notice it who never saw me before."

Then he glanced down upon his companion, and beheld upon her countenance an expression which at once explained the situation. She looked as no woman ever does except when she's either sea sick or in love. A honey-moon smile of the most aggravated type transformed her rather comely face into the familiar mask of imbecility; and not even the blank stare with which he met her upturned eyes, moved her to modify a single detail of her ridiculous grimace.

"She must be crazy, too," he thought, with a shudder; unconsciously molding the phrase of his idea to fit the popular judgment regarding his own mental condition. "Poor girl; her disappointment has turned her brain."

She steered him into a side street; and just as he was trying to think of a delicate way in which he could urge her to discontinue looking at him in that disquieting fashion, she paused before a gate and said:

"This is the minister's house, the Rev. Mr. Knowles, the man who married us, you know."

There was a painful ambiguity about her words which perplexed Drane to such an extent that a servant had ushered them handily into the good pastor's study before he recovered his self-possession.

A venerable gentleman rose from a large chair, and greeted them with courtesy.

"You remember me, don't you?" said the girl, before Drane could open his mouth. "I'm Nellie Blake, or I was before you married me to Mr. Drane, last Tuesday."

She simpered in a most distressing way and looked up at Drane. He felt his hair scurring at the roots, for he saw now that lunacy was the only explanation of the girl's conduct.

"I ought to explain—" he began.

But the minister stopped him with a wave of the hand.

"No explanation is required, Mr. Drane," said he. "I remember you perfectly, and I do trust that nothing has happened in this short space to mar the happiness which I sincerely wished you when I made you one."

"But my dear sir—" cried Drane, in horror. Nellie interrupted him with a giggle.

"You see, sir, it isn't really much of any thing," she said, "and perhaps we ought not to have bothered you about it; but the truth is I've lost the certificate you gave me. I'm just as stupid as I can be, but I can't help it."

"Oh! if that is all—"

"But it isn't that. It isn't half of it," Drane exclaimed. "The truth is—"

"Now, you naughty boy," cried Nellie, putting her hand playfully over his mouth, "I shan't let you go on this way."

"Some trifling disagreement," said the Rev. Mr. Knowles, smiling good-naturedly. "I have no doubt that it can be repaired as easily as the loss of the certificate."

"Sir," said Drane, breaking loose from the restraining hand, "I assure you that it is your duty to—"

"And I assure you, sir," said the old clergyman, with dignity, "that it is your duty, as it is your privilege, and should be your delight, to be ever kind, forbearing and gentle with the woman who has given you the honest affection of her heart, and whose hand I joined with yours in this very room. Look at her now."

Nellie had fallen upon a sofa and was sobbing with industrious vigor. "You have brought tears to her eyes," Nellie pretended to wring out her handkerchief. "She might faint with the disappointment at your very feet!"

Nellie began to faint with a rigid determination which alarmed Drane, and called forth more remonstrances from the kind-hearted old man. Together they made her comfortable upon the sofa and fanned her till there was a small cyclone in the study. When she was quiet Drane saw his opportunity,

and, in a voice as calm as he could make it, he said:

"My dear sir, you are wholly mistaken in this matter. I am not the man who married this young woman, and I have never had the pleasure of seeing either her or yourself before to-day."

"Do you mean to say that she doesn't know her own husband?" asked the reverend gentleman, with great surprise. "This is preposterous."

"She knows perfectly well that I am not her husband," said Drane. "For some purpose of her own she has lured me here, and has claimed me before you, and you have pretended to recognize me. But for the honesty that I read in your face, sir, I should be tempted to say that this was all a great conspiracy to entrap me."

"Young man," said Rev. Mr. Knowles, with deep severity, "I never forget a face. I knew you by your necktie!"

It was the one article of conspicuous apparel which he had retained since the first exchange with the tramp in the Turkish bath. He cursed it in his soul.

"But look at me more closely; look into my face!" he exclaimed.

Rev. Mr. Knowles pulled a pair of spectacles down from his forehead and approached Drane with a grim determination to make sure of him written all over his usually benign countenance. Drane lifted up his head and looked straight at the glittering gold rims of the glasses. He felt certain that he should not fail of an acquittal if once he was properly inspected.

But Rev. Mr. Knowles made an error which is alarmingly common in cases where personal identity is at issue. He fixed his gaze rigidly on the one thing which had previously misled him—the necktie—and to all intents and purposes his scrutiny went no further. And oh, how he did identify that necktie. How he reached in and pulled its secret out! How dead certain, how immovably, unutterably positive he was, when he raised his eyes from it and pushed up his glasses again, that that was the veritable necktie with which he had forever united the fate of Miss Nellie Blake. Then he glanced at Drane's face with his unassisted eyes; saw simply a physiognomy with the customary number of features on it, and was convinced.

"I was not mistaken," said he, "and I am at a loss to understand your conduct."

It takes a really good man to be fixed in error; but doubt is the eternal portion of the unregenerate. The Rev. Mr. Knowles was more certain that he had married Drane, than Drane was that he hadn't.

"Why," continued Mr. Knowles, "if it was your intention to cast this woman off did you bring her here where your iniquity was almost certain to transpire?"

"I didn't bring her here," said Drane, despondingly, "she brought me."

"So I supposed; so I supposed, young man," and the Rev. Mr. Knowles frowned in great disapprobation, "but now that



CLAIMED.

you are here let me exhort you to do your whole duty. What reason you have for denying your wife I do not know. Have you any thing to say against her character?"

"Heaven forbid," said Drane, hastily. "That is a subject on which I never say any thing."

"You have the instincts of a gentleman," the old clergyman said, slowly. "I noticed that when you were here before; especially then, I may add, for your behavior to-day has left much to be desired."

"I am greatly indebted to the abominable tramp who personated me on that occasion," exclaimed Drane, with bitter emphasis, "and I regret that his reputation should suffer during my temporary use of my own name."

"Come, come," said the genial pastor, cheerfully; "let's have no more hard words. Come, Nellie, give your hand to your husband once more in my presence, and start anew on what I trust will be a happy life together."

Nellie rose with great alacrity and advanced to Drane, who stood in sullen dismay, wondering what the woman's object was and how far she would allow the ridiculous game to proceed.

Meanwhile Rev. Mr. Knowles had shifted his spectacles from his forehead to the end of his nose, and he beamed more benignly over them than under them if possible.

"I am an old man," said he, "and you must pardon my interference in the affairs of the young. I am not yet clear as to what has brought you to me for a second time; but let us say it is Providence—" and he glanced reverently upward, the one direction in which the good man's sight had never failed him. "I entreat you, my son, be a man," he continued, "and leave this strange and evil course for the better way."

Drane was torn by many conflicting emotions. The old clergyman's manner was so kind that Drane could have kissed his venerable hand, and his error was so annoying that Drane longed to break his venerable neck.

"My dear—" he was going to say "my dear sir," but Mr. Knowles let him get no further than the adjective. He spread his hands over the pair, in the familiar attitude, and Nellie, taking the hint, fell upon Drane's neck. His utter inability to struggle against circumstances led him absolutely to tears; and the Rev. Mr. Knowles, taking out a large handkerchief, cried softly in unison.

They were all so much occupied that they did not hear the door-bell, nor had their attitudes changed by a hair's-breadth when the door opened and Mrs. Bessie Harland, of Buffalo, N. Y., walked in. Drane saw her out of the corners of his eyes, and he tried hastily to shake Nellie's arms from around his neck, but they were clasped hard and fast, and nothing could loosen them. Bessie gave a little sigh which was almost a sob, and sank upon the sofa. There were first-rate prospects of a genuine faint now, and Drane's agony was proportionately increased.

At the sound of her late mistress' sob, Nellie turned her head, and when she saw who had entered her dismay was so plainly written on her face that even the faint-sighted old pastor saw it. He misinterpreted it, of course, and cast a look of disapproval upon Bessie.

"Young woman," said he, "are you the unhappy cause of difference between these two?"

But Bessie paid little attention to his words. She rose unsteadily from the sofa, threw up her head with a pitiful little attempt at dignity and said:

"Mr. Drane, I came to this city because I believed that you were ill and in trouble, and I hoped to help you as you once helped me. A young man, whom I believe to be a representative of the press, directed me to this house. That explains my presence; but, of course, I can stay no longer. I must say goodbye."

"There, sir; didn't I tell you your name was Drane!" exclaimed Rev. Mr. Knowles, who had been fairly bursting with a desire to say it since Bessie's first word had been uttered.

"Bessie—Mrs. Harland!" cried Drane, choking with love, rage and other emotions which afflict the young, "I swear to you that this is all a hideous mistake. I have never seen this woman before to-day, and I don't care to see her again till the day of judgment, on which occasion may she escape her deserts! She was hanging round my neck for some insane purpose of her own; and this gentleman"—and Drane softened his voice and bowed to Mr. Knowles—"persists that he married us."

"Married!" cried Bessie, and she sank back again upon the sofa.

"But he didn't, you know," cried Drane, hastening toward her. "He's near-sighted or something, and she really married my necktie—oh, give my word, I don't know what I'm saying, but I—I—Bessie, I love you, God knows, and every beat of my heart has been faithful to you since my eyes first rested on your face. May—"

"Sir!" cried Rev. Mr. Knowles, in a voice of thunder. "This is more than I can permit. Will you make love to another woman before your wife's eyes, you young villain?"

But this rebuke fell unheeded, for Drane's unexpected declaration had proven too much for Bessie's nerves already deeply shaken, and she had fallen into a faintness, as deep, to all appearances, as death itself. Drane sprang forward to her side, and Rev. Mr. Knowles pattered along after him. Nellie, too, was moved by the sight of her former mistress' pallid face, and she bid fair to be of more real use than either of the men. But they were all in earnest, and so intent upon their task that they did not see the door open, nor did they know that any one had entered till a harsh voice said: "Lawrence Drane, ye bloomin' lunatic, I've got to take yer in!"

Drane turned to confront Jimmy and the two policemen.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

### A Reverend Dude.

Mr. Kirke Depew (Sunday morning)—I see Rev. Mr. Alban Cope is going to preach at our church this morning.

Mrs. Depew—Why, isn't he awfully high church?

Mr. Depew—Awfully! He carries his ritualistic notions so far that he wears stained-glass spectacles.—Puck.

### Didn't Know the Combination.

"The Funny Man" is away this week. Let's put something good in his department."

"All right. It would be quite a novelty. It must be easy to write such stuff. What shall we put in?"

They are still thinking.—West Shore.

### It Supported Him.

"You have no right to send me up as a vagrant," said a lame beggar to a magistrate.

"You have no visible means of support," replied the judge.

"What's the matter with this crutch?"—Judge.

### Looking a Long Way Ahead.

He—Dese pants an' obnoxiously ruin! Watcher make 'em so short fur?

She—Well, you see, you're bon allin' fur some time, and I cut 'em dat way, in case you dropped off sudden like I did could wear 'em to de funeral without my habin' ter worry myself in de time ob execution wid alterin' 'em.—Light.